# State of Arkansas



# Arkansas Interoperable Communications Committee (AICC)
# Urban Area Focus Group Charter

## January 2016

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## Section 1: Introduction

The Arkansas Interoperable Communications Committee (AICC) is committed to cooperatively addressing the challenge of communications interoperability. AICC members have the overall responsibility for supporting the Arkansas Interoperable Communications Executive Committee (AICEC) and carrying out the committee charges. The Urban Area Focus Group is established by the AICEC, through the State and Local Implementation Grant Program (SLIGP), and is responsible for representing the needs of urban public safety personnel in the development of the Arkansas Public Safety Broadband Network (APSBN).

Arkansas is a very rural state but has 22 cities with a population of 20,000 or more, according to the 2010 US Census. By establishing the Urban Area Focus Group, the AICC will be able to coordinate and implement strategies based upon input by and for urban areas of the state, as represented by Urban Area Focus Group members. The group is composed of members from these 22 urban areas (the city or its surrounding county) of the state. This document describes the purpose, membership, responsibilities, scope, operating principles, and management by which the Urban Area Focus Group will achieve success.

### Interoperability Vision

*In order to better protect lives and property, The State of Arkansas will lead the Nation in establishing the ability for public safety stakeholders, across disciplines and jurisdictions, to exchange information seamlessly, as authorized, on demand and in real-time.*

### Interoperability Mission

*The Arkansas Interoperable Communications Committee (AICC) will work collaboratively with the public safety stakeholders across disciplines, organizations, levels of government, and jurisdictions (including bordering States) to achieve the Arkansas interoperability vision. To do this, the AICC will coordinate and provide resources to help public safety stakeholders pursue the goals, objectives and strategic initiatives in the Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP).*
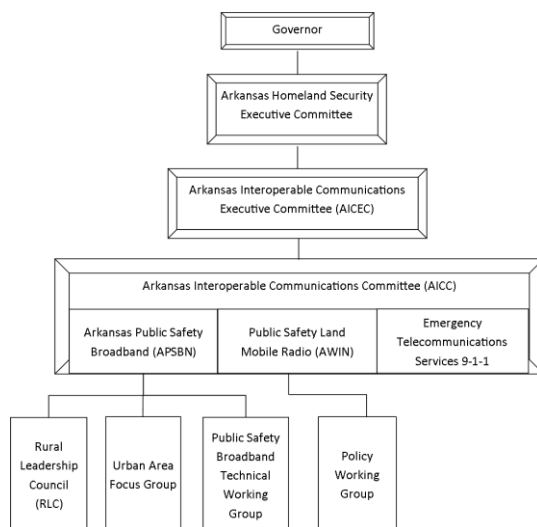
**Section 2: Purpose**

The Urban Area Focus Group was formed to address the challenges facing urban public safety organizations in regards to access to and use of broadband technologies. The Urban Area Focus Group's goals are to:

- Facilitate the flow of information from Arkansas counties and cities to State and Federal officials tasked with developing the plan.
- Ensure that a broad range of local-level public safety responders are represented.
- Assist with the development of coverage and capacity requirements for Arkansas's participation in the National Public Safety Broadband Network (NPSBN).
- Provide advice and guidance on policies and processes that are necessary for the successful implementation of the NPSBN in Arkansas.

**Section 3: Governance**

The Urban Area Focus Group is established as a working group of the Arkansas Interoperable Communications Executive Committee (AICEC), which governs the Arkansas Interoperable Communications Committee (AICC). The AICC addresses the challenges facing interdisciplinary communications across multiple jurisdictions and establishes a partnership among law enforcement, fire departments, state agencies, cities and counties in order to enhance communications interoperability capabilities. It also provides a forum to discuss related public safety communications initiatives. The AICC's goals are to: ensure the participation of relevant state executives and political leaders in the decision making process, build relationships at the local, regional, state, and federal levels, ensure that a broad range of local-level public safety responders are represented and assure participatory decision making.

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## Section 3: Membership

The Urban Area Focus Group is established as a working group of the AICEC. Nominations were solicited from cities and their surrounding counties designated as having a population of 20,000 or more, according to the 2010 US Census. Applications were reviewed and members were selected by the AICEC.

| CITY | POPULATION* | COUNTY |
|---|---|---|
| Little Rock | 193,524 | Pulaski |
| Fort Smith | 86,209 | Sebastian |
| Fayetteville | 73,580 | Washington |
| Springdale | 69,797 | Benton |
| Jonesboro | 67,263 | Craighead |
| North Little Rock | 62,304 | Pulaski |
| Conway | 58,908 | Faulkner |
| Rogers | 55,964 | Benton |
| Pine Bluff | 49,083 | Jefferson |
| Bentonville | 35,301 | Benton |
| Hot Springs | 35,193 | Garland |
| Benton | 30,681 | Saline |
| Texarkana | 29,919 | Miller |
| Sherwood | 29,523 | Pulaski |
| Jacksonville | 28,364 | Pulaski |
| Russellville | 27,920 | Pope |
| Bella Vista | 26,461 | Benton |
| West Memphis | 26,245 | Crittenden |
| Paragould | 26,113 | Greene |
| Cabot | 23,776 | Lonoke |
| Searcy | 22,858 | White |
| Van Buren | 22,791 | Crawford |
| | *2010 US Census | |

The AICEC has designated two Ex-Officio members to serve as advisors to the Urban Area Focus Group. These Ex-Officio members will be from urban areas within the state.

The AICEC further designated that the Arkansas Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) will be responsible for facilitating the on-going work of the group.

Current Urban Area Focus Group members, Ex-Officio members, and others working closely with the Urban Area Focus Group are listed in **Appendix A**.

In the event that an Urban Area Focus Group member cannot fulfill their responsibilities, the AICEC may select a replacement candidate.

The AICEC may also add additional Urban Area Focus Group members as needed to address specific needed areas of expertise.

**Section 4: Responsibilities**

Minimum expectations for all Urban Area Focus Group members include:

- Serve as subject matter expert on emergency communications
- Commit to serve a two-year term
- Participate in approximately two in-person committee meetings annually
- Participate in conference calls and town hall meetings as needed to further the work of the AICC, the Rural Leadership Council (RLC), and the APSBN.
- Support the Arkansas Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan mission, goals and objectives
- Participate as needed in FirstNet briefings and events.
- Assist with the activities leading to the development of a plan for Arkansas's participation in the NPSBN
- Support the majority decision; speak with one voice in regards to the workings of the Group

**Section 5: Scope**

The Urban Area Focus Group is charged with ensuring the needs of urban public safety personnel addressed in the development of the Arkansas Public Safety Broadband Plan. This includes addressing the following needs and concerns:

- Capacity and Coverage
- Applications
- Policies and Processes
- Legal and Legislative
- Roaming

**Section 6: Operating Principles**

The Urban Area Focus Group will use the following guidelines regarding how the membership will interact, and the ground rules for meetings and standards for member accountability. Premier to the Urban Area Focus Group's Operating Principles is the definition of interoperable communications.

***Interoperability is the ability to communicate, as needed, on demand, and as authorized at all levels of government and across all Public Safety disciplines.***

## Overarching Principles

Keep in mind the reason the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network deployment in Arkansas exists: to serve the first responders of the State of Arkansas in their mission to serve the citizens of Arkansas, and to serve first responders nationwide.

- Maintain the sense of urgency that 9/11 and more recent events such as Hurricane Sandy and the Boston Marathon bombings brought to the issue of communications interoperability.
- Ensure the issue of communications interoperability remains in front of elected officials as administrations change.
- Speak with one voice when reporting externally – present a unified front.
- Ensure that the State of Arkansas takes on a collaborative approach in dealing with issues regarding the operations, expansion, or management of the system.

## Planning and Management Principles

Think not in terms of local, county, or even statewide interoperable communications. Think in terms of nationwide interoperable communications.

- Think interdisciplinary.
- Use a phased approach to strategic planning.
- Ensure that the state's requirements for Public Safety Broadband clearly reflect the desired future goals and strategies.
- Avoid overuse of acronyms and codes to eliminate confusion or misunderstanding.

## Technology Principles

Recognize and respect that each discipline has unique needs and attempt to address them as part of the state's requirements for public safety broadband.

Consider security concerns during the planning of future communications solutions.

The initial scope of the National Public Safety Broadband Network deployment in Arkansas is data; mission-critical voice communications is a future goal.

**Section 7: Decision Making**

    A.  Voting

Urban Area Focus Group members are responsible for representing their discipline, organization, area or agency. If a member is unable to attend a committee meeting, they may cast a vote by contacting the meeting facilitator, casting their vote via email, or by designating another Focus Group member as their proxy.

Ex Officio members are appointed by the AICEC and provide advice to the Urban Area Focus Group membership. Ex Officio members will not participate in Urban Area Focus Group votes.

The Urban Area Focus Group may invite subject matter experts to participate in meetings as the need arises. These subject matter experts are not considered part of the Focus Group, and as such will not have voting privileges.

    B.  Committee Decision making process

The Urban Area Focus Group will work towards consensus-based decision making. However, if a consensus cannot be reached, a vote will be taken and simple majority rules. All decisions and recommendations approved by a simple majority will be considered a decision or recommendation of the Urban Area Focus Group when presented to the AICEC for consideration.

All Urban Area Focus Group members will be held accountable by the discipline, organization, or agency that they represent. The AICEC final decision in all matters related to committee participation.  The AICEC may make recommendations for the replacement of committee members who are not participating.

Decisions and recommendations will be reported to the AICEC through the SWIC.

**Section 8: Logistics**

The Urban Area Focus Group will meet face-to-face approximately two times per year in Central Arkansas; once during the AICC Conference (usually held in June or July of each year), and another date to be determined based on FirstNet activities/meetings within the state.  Additional meetings may be held if needed, but conference calls and/or webinars will be the method most utilized to reduce travel time and facilitate the work of the group.

Urban Area Focus Group meetings will be open to the public unless otherwise determined in advance.

Urban Area Focus Group members may also be invited to attend Conferences or other meetings focusing on Public Safety Broadband both inside and outside of the state.  In such cases, the SLIGP Grant will reimburse travel expenses under GSA limits.

The Department of Information Systems is responsible for providing administrative support for all meetings. In specific:

1. Maintenance of the Urban Area Focus Group roster and contact information
2. Identification of meeting locations and logistics
3. Development and distribution of meeting agendas
4. Facilitation of meetings
5. Recording and distribution of meeting minutes
6. **Assignment and tracking of action items**

## Current Urban Area Focus Group Members

| | NAME | JOB TITLE | AGENCY | COUNTY | DISCIPLINE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Mark Barnhard | ARES Emergency Coordinator/RACES Officer | Pulaski County | Pulaski | Emergency Communications |
| 2 | Karen Blevins | Director of Emergency Management | Jefferson County | Jefferson | Emergency Management |
| 3 | Joe Bratton | Fire Battalion Chief | City of Jacksonville Fire Department | Pulaski | Fire Services |
| 4 | Melissa Bridges | Network Security Manager | City of Little Rock | Pulaski | Information Technology |
| 5 | Natisha Claypool | Asst Dispatch Manager | City of Fayetteville Police Department | Washington | Emergency Communications |
| 6 | Joe Crisafulli | Manager, Facilities & Emergency Management | Conway Corp | Faulkner | Emergency Management |
| 7 | William Hyde | Deputy Fire Chief | City of Rogers Fire Department | Benton | Fire Services |
| 8 | Stephen Johnson | Fire Marshall | City Of Texarkana | Miller | Fire Services |
| 9 | Christy Kenzel | 911 Administrator | Lonoke County | Lonoke | Emergency Communications |
| 10 | Bobby King | Asst Director of Emergency Managment | Garland County | Garland | Emergency Management |
| 11 | Leonard Montgomery | Professional Development Division Commander | City of North Little Rock Police Department | Pulaski | Law Enforcement |
| 12 | Jeff Presley | E911 Director | City of Jonesboro Police Department | Craighead | Emergency Communications |
| 13 | Jeramy Ransom | Radio Communications Technician | City of Fort Smith Police Department | Sebastian | Emergency Communications |
| 14 | Phil Robinson | Fire Chief | City of Cabot Fire Department | Lonoke | Fire Services |
| 15 | Robert "Bob" Sharp | Communications & Administrative Support Officer | City of Little Rock Fire Department | Pulaski | Emergency Communications |
| 16 | Greg Trout | Technology Captain | City of Paragould | Greene | Information Technology |
| 17 | Jeff Turner | Director of Emergency Management | Sebastian County | Sebastian | Emergency Management |
| 18 | Willie Watts | Fire Battalion Chief | City of Fayetteville Fire Department | Washington | Fire Services |

## Current Ex-Officio Members

Randy Foshee – City of Little Rock IT Director

John Luther – Washington County Director of Emergency Management

## Current Facilitator

Penny Rubow – Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC)